lit. hist. V. 15.

A

LETTER

TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUGH,

ON

NATIONAL DEFENCE:

WITH

Some REMARKS on Dr. SMITH's Chapter on that Subject, in his Book entitled, "AN ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS."

——— Sævior armis
Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciſcitur orbem.

LUC.

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MDCCLXXVIII.

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LETTER, &c.

My Lord Duke,

AS the chief ſubject of this letter relates to the intereſt and honour of that country, whoſe eſteem and affection you poſſeſs in the higheſt degree, there is no perſon to whom I can addreſs it with ſo much propriety as your Grace. It conſiſts of a few plain thoughts on a meaſure relating to national defence, that has been once and again defeated; with ſome obſervations on our preſent ſtate. A ſtate, without queſtion, the moſt hazardous and critical, and moſt pregnant with important conſequences, of any in which this nation has ever been. My acquaintance with your Grace is ſo recent, that I cannot pretend to have diſcovered your ſentiments on national affairs; far leſs do I imagine

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that I can either enlighten or excite your ſound and ardent mind. I mean only to gain the attention of the public, and eſpecially of my countrymen, to an obſcure and anonymous writer, by availing myſelf of a name, that is ſo perfectly agreeable to them.

The meaſure I mean to treat of, is that which was propoſed and urged with ſo much ſpirit in ſpring 1776, by a noble lord then in the houſe of commons, viz. the extending the militia laws to Scotland. With a juſt admiration of his lordſhip's talents and eloquence, with the warmeſt gratitude for the exertion of his manly zeal, in behalf of his diſgraced country, there were ſtill ſuperior qualities diſplayed on that occaſion, that raiſed in me the higheſt eſteem for *Lord Mountſtuart*; his magnanimity, and the extent of his political views, which qualify him for acting the part of a patriot ſtateſman.

Every one knows the hiſtory of the laſt militia bill for Scotland, which was moved for by his lordſhip. The public has ſeen the frivolous or unjuſt arguments, that were uſed againſt it. Nor has it paſſed unobſerved, how his lordſhip was deſerted

by

by adminiſtration, and what feeble ſupport he received even from his own countrymen in parliament. It would be unjuſt, however, not to obſerve, that there were a few members of parliament from that part of the united kingdom, who engaged in the meaſure with an ardour that implied ſincerity, and particularly * one gentleman, in high office, whoſe good ſenſe and extenſive views had enabled him to overcome his ſtrong and early prejudices againſt it.

The pretence on which the bill was thrown out of parliament, and which induced ſo many of the Engliſh members to act on that occaſion, againſt their avowed principles for a militia, was its not containing a clauſe, ordaining the funds for the ſupport of the militia of Scotland, to be raiſed by a tax on the reſpective counties. A pretence founded on manifeſt injuſtice, becauſe the militia of England has been, ever ſince its inſtitution, ſupported out of the common funds of both kingdoms; for though their pay and other expences are drawn immediately

* The Lord Advocate for Scotland.

from the receivers general of the land tax in the reſpective counties, for the ſake of conveniency, yet it is allowed them as part payment of the ſaid tax, in their accompts with the treaſury. So that never was there an argument more abſurd formed, than that on which the rejection of the Scotch militia bill was founded; but it anſwered the purpoſe of the day, which was to make the Engliſh members, who in their principles were friendly to a militia, imagine that the Scotch were making an unreaſonable demand; and to cool the latter by the fear of an additional land tax, againſt the expreſs ſtipulation of the union. Nor was the pretence leſs inconſiderate and unwiſe, than it was unjuſt; becauſe whatever internal defence ſhall be thought neceſſary for the peace and ſecurity of Scotland, will prove an additional ſtrength to the whole kingdom, and guard the wealth and liberties of all.

When, in the year 1760, the firſt militia bill for Scotland was brought into parliament, the people of Scotland ſhewed themſelves worthy of the attention of thoſe diſtinguiſhed patriots who moved and ſupported it. The call for arms was then

then univerſal, and when the legiſlature refuſed to anſwer this call, contempt and indignation fell upon thoſe who were ſuppoſed to have betrayed their privileges; the ſpirit of the country ſeemed to riſe on defeat; and hopes might have from thence been conceived, even in the midſt of deſpair.

But when the attempt was renewed in the year 1776, and proved unſucceſsful, the people in general, accuſtomed to ſuch affronts, received this new one in ſilent ſubmiſſion, whilſt thoſe who ſhould have reſented it, ſeemed to have made an eſcape from a regulation of policy, which if not expenſive, would at leaſt have been troubleſome to them in the execution; and thereby proved themſelves unworthy of better treatment. For when a national affront is tamely ſubmitted to, when no endeavours are uſed to ſhew that it is felt, when it is received rather as a favour than an indignity, ſuch perſons ſhew that they are ſurely beyond all hopes of recovery, and that he who ſets his foot upon them to ſtep into power, does them no injury.

But though there is little to hope for from thoſe, from whom the greateſt zeal for the honour of the nation might be expected; yet there are many of inferior rank in that part of the kingdom, who feel to the bottom of their hearts, the injuſtice and contempt with which their country has been treated, though they have no means of making themſelves be heard by the legiſlature. The great body of the people are as fit to be truſted with arms, as they are willing and able to wield them in defence of their country; and there are thouſands of inhabitants of this great city who derive their blood from that part of the kingdom, (of which the writer of this letter is one) who know in what eſtimation to hold ſuch eminent patriots, as would wipe out the ſtain on the national honour, and thereby do ſuch material ſervice to the realm.

I write with confidence of the high approbation ſuch perſons would meet with from the great body of their compatriots, were they to make a new attempt to have the militia laws extended to Scotland, and yet I cannot from thence derive any hope of ſucceſs. It is only from the generous

nerous ſpirit of the Engliſh, when their eyes are opened on views of ſound policy, that we can hope for the extenſion of a plan of internal defence, to a part of the kingdom of which they have ſo long been weakly jealous; it is only from the preſſing neceſſity of miniſters of ſtate when they are driven to extremity, that we can expect their conſent to the completion of that ſyſtem, which they have always oppoſed.

It appears to me, that there never can be a more complete combination of both theſe circumſtances, than there is at preſent. Every Engliſhman who reflects for a moment on the ſtate of the nation, who ſees the diſgrace that has befallen it, and the danger to which it is expoſed, muſt be convinced, that in all the intervals of peace, the martial ſpirit of this country is allowed to fall too low. This is the cauſe why every rumour fills us with anxiety. This is the cauſe why we are ſtunned with every blow, however far it may fall from the vital parts. Enfeebled and diſarmed, we ſeem incapable of any exertion; our reſources appear to be exhauſted, when the war has hardly com-

menced, and we think we have ſpent all our ſtrength, ere we have well wielded for once our weapons of war. He who reflects on this ſtate, will ſearch in the principles of the conſtitution for ſome expedient to correct this evil, for ſome eſtabliſhment to preſerve us in a greater equality of vigour.

And ſurely no miniſter of ſtate, however much biaſſed with the prejudices of office, can now deny, that a militia may be ſo formed as to conſtitute a very uſeful defence for Great Britain, unleſs he admits that the Americans are braver and more apt to become expert in arms than the Britiſh. To our fatal experience we have found that the people whom we affected to deſpiſe as an inferior race, have in a few years become martial (invincible I had almoſt called them, after a great miniſter of ſtate) by the ſimple inſtitution of a militia. And yet while they to a man are trained to the uſe of arms, to defend themſelves againſt our juſt and legal claims, we are obliged to purchaſe the uncertain valour of foreign auxiliaries from every corner of Germany, in ſupport of them. If the foreſight of miniſters is generally

nerally limited to plans for the preſervation of their power, if all their exertions are mere temporary expedients; ſhould the gentlemen of England, or the parliament of Great Britain, have neglected an inſtitution ſo uſeful as the militia of England? ſhould they have ſuffered commiſſions to have fallen into ignoble hands? ought they to have permitted the introduction of univerſal ſubſtitution to undermine the very baſis of its utility? have they forgot how the credit of the nation roſe on its firſt eſtabliſhment? do they not remember that from the date of its inſtitution, commenced the æra of our ſucceſs in the laſt glorious war? has it already fallen into oblivion, what a truly reſpectable force the militia of South Britain formed during that period?

But, deficient in many reſpects, and inferior to its former ſtate as it has become, why was not the militia, at leaſt in part, arrayed after an act of parliament had paſſed laſt year for that purpoſe? it was ſtrange to provide for ſuch a meaſure, and yet not carry it into execution. Had the Romans been an unwarlike people, fear and conſternation had made them open

their gates to Hannibal, after the battle of Cannæ. All the paſſions act by ſympathy. In a warlike nation few cowards are to be found; and the public counſels partake of the character of the people. Had the militia, ſuch as it is, been arrayed at this time, the military ſpirit would have ſpread through the kingdom, and the complaint of the officers, that recruits are not to be had for our army, would have been avoided, had the militia been cheriſhed by adminiſtration, and remained a favourite object of the Engliſh gentry, the original deſign of its inſtitution would have been carried on and completed before now; the whole people of England would have been trained to arms. Then the multitude, like Hydra, would have become invincible; and the Americans, if they dared at all to revolt, would ſoon have felt their zeal abate, when they found they had to repel, not the temporary efforts of an army, however brave, that could never be replaced, but the unceaſing and endleſs attacks of a great nation bred to arms.

But the frugal management of the funds has been alledged as a ſufficient reaſon

why the militia was not arrayed, and why even the army was not augmented by new levies. But ſurely the men who ſit at the helm of a great ſtate, muſt know, that the beſt œconomy in the view of a war, is preparation. Improvidence muſt always lead to prodigality, whilſt one hundred thouſand pounds, laid out in wiſe preparation, may often ſave millions to a ſtate. Impoſed on by their friends, or deceived by their enemies, the meaſures of adminiſtration to ſuppreſs the rebellion, have always been too late. The force that was inſufficient the ſecond year, would have proved effectual in the firſt; and the divided and unconnected efforts of a mighty armament in the third, might have probably prevailed in the ſecond year of the war. Thus a misjudged œconomy has gradually impaired our ſtrength, united, encouraged, and envigorated the colonies, and rendered utterly uncertain, or at leaſt poſtponed to a diſtant period, the final event.

We have not been ſo improvident, it muſt be owned, in our naval preparations. Our extenſive trade puts it in our power to equip a great fleet on ſhort warning, by means

means of the number of ſailors it furniſhes; as a reſpectable militia, if we had one, would produce a formidable army on any ſudden emergency. The fear of the houſe of Bourbon has occaſioned thoſe preparations. They were wiſe; for our weakneſs may draw hoſtilities from neighbouring nations, when intereſt or policy do not authorize them. But can America be conquered by our navy? vain were ſuch a hope! by cutting them off from the means of luxury and commerce, we would only deprive them of the ſubjects of rivalſhip and conteſt, and the means of corruption and effeminacy; and at the ſame time excite their domeſtic induſtry, and increaſe their union, till growing great, and populous, and warlike, like the Romans while they were confined to Italy, like them alſo they ſhould iſſue forth at laſt, to conquer the world. They too would have their period; but the *pauper-tas fæcunda virorum*, of Lucan, would on the downfall of their empire, be juſtly applied to the vigour of their riſing ſtate. Better than confine them to their continent, which would ſoon prove a nurſery of inexhauſtible armies, far better would

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it be to leave them to their fate; when the full operation of commerce, and its attendants, wealth and luxury, would ſoon lead them into the career of other nations, and at once civilize and enervate, if not divide. But if the honour of the nation is to be recovered, and the Americans reduced to their former ſtate of dependence on this government, as part of our dominions; that can only be accompliſhed by land armies of our national troops, not only completely trained in arms, but endowed with a national ſpirit. And how is that ſpirit to be reſtored or preſerved, but by the permanent and extenſive eſtabliſhment of a national militia?

To hire troops from Germany might be a wiſe expedient at the time; ſuch an expedient as neceſſity often forces on improvidence. But prudence ſhould certainly have taught us not to rely on that country for new ſupplies. The firſt army of Germans, though cold in the cauſe, might be excellent troops. But when they are expended, the next levies muſt conſiſt of the refuſe of that country. If the glaring examples of hiſtory, have not impreſſed us with a ſenſe of the danger of employing foreign

foreign mercenaries; or if that danger is guarded againſt, by ſending into the field with them a large proportion of national troops; yet by what ſpirit was adminiſtration conducted? Was it confidence, or negligence, or oeconomy, or a mixture of all three, when they made ſuch ſlight preparations at home, againſt the croſs accidents that might befal their armies in America? I am no enemy to adminiſtration, though I can find no apology to palliate their conduct. I have no doubt of the rectitude of their intentions. I do not compare them with that turbulent faction, whoſe illiberal oppoſition has in a great meaſure occaſioned the war. But ſhould the miniſters of a great king, and a great empire, have been in a ſtate to feel nothing but confuſion and diſmay on the miſcarriage of Burgoyne's expedition? I ſhall not enquire into the cauſe of the misfortune. I blame neither the miniſter who planned, nor the general who conducted the armament; they are accountable to their country, and a little time will put it in the power of the public to do juſtice to either, or both. Such diſaſters are to be expected in war. And as we have given

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the Americans time to improve ability, and to exert vigour, this is not the laſt diſaſter that is likely to befal us. We may look for more of the ſame nature. The queſtion is, how they are to be repaired? To engage in this war without foreſeeing the means of proſecuting it, was folly in the extreme. To foreſee theſe means, and to take no ſteps to provide them, was a degree of negligence not to be expected in honeſt miniſters. And yet I do not ſee how they can deny the charge. Nothing can excuſe them, but a belief that their plans were infallible. But what can excuſe the preſumption of that belief?

But perhaps it may be alledged that keeping up the force already ſent to America, by recruiting at home and in Germany, was ſufficient to ſupply the probable loſſes of the war; and that it would have been prodigality to have provided for unforeſeen events. The loſs of a fifth part during the campaign, as uſual, was expected, and care was taken to have that loſs ſupplied. But who could have forſeen that a whole army would be ſurrounded, and obliged to ſurrender in a body? The want of foreſight in the governors of nations is much

much to be lamented indeed; it is equally the cauſe of preſumption, and deſpair; of the firſt, when the operations of the war are concerted; of the ſecond, when they miſcarry.

But ſince we have been obliged to ranſack Germany for deſerters, and the refuſe of the Hans towns for recruits to our foreign troops, why have not effectual means been uſed to arm the Canadians? If they were ſo formidable to the colonies laſt war, one would think they could not ſo ſoon have loſt their warlike diſpoſition, and that ſuitable encouragement would have brought them into the field again. This ſeemed too to be the object of government, when they ſo lately formed a new ſyſtem of laws for the Canadians. In whetting the weapon have they made it ſo ſharp, that it is now dangerous for the hand that ſhould wield it? If it was poſſible to have brought ten or fifteen thouſand of our Canadian ſubjects into the field, where was the wiſdom in tranſporting an equal uumber of Germans, at three times the expence, acroſs the Atlantic? Where are the emigrants uner M'Clean? How have they been rewarded for their fidelity, their zeal, and

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their labours? Have they not been discountenanced and discouraged to such a degree, that it is probable they are now dissolved; and that, warned by the example of what has befallen them, no such corps will enter into our service again? And yet the complaint was, that men could not be found.

Is it not surprising, that they who are supposed fit to govern the counsels of a great nation, should hesitate a moment on childish punctilios, when the honour, the prosperity, and safety of that nation is in the utmost hazard?

If they wanted resources in their own genius or invention, they had only to look back to the recent period of the last war, for precedents to have directed their conduct. No wonder that the memory of our past faults, from whence we should have taken warning, has perished, since the virtue and glory of those times, that should set us an example, have fallen into oblivion. Is this nation, in her public measures, eternally doomed to excess or defect? Shall we never be guided by a provident magnanimity? Had the great man who conducted the last war, known when to

have ſtopt, we ſhould have avoided this dangerous revolt of the colonies. Had the preſent upright and cautious premier partook of his ſpirit, and copied his conduct when this war commenced, we ſhould not now have had to look for its diſtant and uncertain concluſion.

If the fear of diſturbing the manufactures reſtrained the conductors of the war from thinking of new levies in England, or in the low countries of Scotland, till neceſſity ſhould force them to it, yet why did they not avail themſelves during laſt year of the Highlands of Scotland, where there are no manufactures? No nation poſſeſſes an advantage in war, ſuperior, according to its dimenſions, than might be derived from that part of the kingdom, did we only know how to uſe it. A people hardy and warlike, a gentry proud and indigent, and chiefs and nobles by ancient cuſtom the natural leaders and captains of their tribes. I do not exaggerate when I affirm, that with wiſe precaution and prudent management of the clans, ten or twelve thouſand of them might have now been in readineſs to ſupport the dignity of the ſtate and the honour of the nation. They were tried

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laſt war, and they did credit to that noble confidence which firſt employed them. Two battalions of them were raiſed in the beginning of this war. The meaſure was wiſe: but why was it confined to ſo ſmall a number? Why had a ſingle chief, however conſpicuous he might be, the credit and profit of thoſe two battalions? In heaping all the favours upon him, was there no apprehenſion that the reſt might be diſguſted? If it was then ſuppoſed that there was no need of employing any more, why was not he limited to a certain diſtrict of the country, where he could neither have interfered with the uſual levies for recruiting the army, nor with the followers of his neighbouring chiefs?*

* Since writing as above, I find the meaſure of raiſing the Highlanders is adopted by adminiſtration. It is well they have thought of it at laſt; and yet it may be very difficult to execute in four months, what would have been eaſily practicable in two years. The regiments of Edinburgh and Glaſgow, which have been accepted of by government, will neceſſarily interfere with the other ſervice, as the beating orders of the whole extend over all the kingdom. The price of recruits muſt riſe very high, and many will ſtand off for a better market. Such are the bad effects of dilatory conduct. The Highland chiefs ſhould have been confined in their levies to their reſpective diſtricts or counties: in which caſe the beſt men would have enliſted to ſhew their attachment to their chieftains, and the ſtrength and importance of their clans.

Had the directors of the war wiſhed to have had national troops with every poſſible advantage, with the pride of antiquity, with the *eſprit de corps*, with diſcipline and ſkill, with the higheſt name in arms, with colours that never were taken, with that indignant courage, that ariſes from the ſenſe of being maltreated; they had only to have ſearched into the cabinets that contain neglected memorials, to have found the earneſt petition and humble requeſt of ſuch a *corps as I have deſcribed*, to be delivered from the ingratitude and contempt of the maſters to whom we lent them ſome centuries ago, and to be allowed to fight the battles of their country.

I may ſeem to have loſt ſight of my ſubject in tracing ſome of the miſtakes of adminiſtration: but my arguments for having the militia of England on its firſt principles and farther improving it, and for extending the militia laws to Scotland, will receive additional force, after having obſeved that it ſeems to be a part of the neceſſary oeconomy of the ſtate, to have only a ſmall ſtanding army on foot, and yet that it is dangerous in the extreme to be unprepared for war. What I apprehend

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would perfectly unite our two objects together, viz. oeconomy and preparation, would be a well regulated militia.

I ſhall not in this letter ſtate any of the common arguments for a militia, ſuch as the right of a free people to be bred to arms, or the neceſſity of a ſtrong internal defence in caſe of a foreign invaſion, or the jealouſy of ſtanding armies as dangerous to liberty, or the hiſtory of the downfal of all governments as a juſt foundation for that jealouſy. The patriots of modern times have forſaken the opinions of their predeceſſors on this ſubject, and in the pride of their logical ſkill have turned all the arguments formerly uſed againſt a ſtanding army, againſt a militia too, and repreſent ſuch an eſtabliſhment as dangerous to liberty. To me, a demonſtration that they are blinded by their zeal; unleſs they could prove that a whole people bred to arms, and conſcious of their power to defend their freedom, would more tamely ſubmit to the will of a deſpot, than a people unwarlike or unarmed. But perhaps their argument is founded on the ſuppoſition, that every man in the kingdom but themſelves are apt to be tools to a deſigning

prince; that the majority of both houſes of parliament, and all the lords and commoners of the kingdom, except the great orators of oppoſition themſelves, and their few friends and followers, are now perfectly ripe for abſolute monarchy. If this is really their belief, they muſt be excuſed for being jealous of a militia *.

The topick on which I chiefly reſt my argument for a militia, is the neceſſity of our combining together, national oeconomy and preparation for war. Our dominion of the ſea, our commerce and our ſafety, require a reſpectable naval force, even in time of peace: and the conſtant expence of that force added to our enormous load of debt, render it neceſſary for us to be as ſparing as poſſible of our diſburſements for land forces. Yet in the preſent ſtate of Europe, when every na-

* When a war is unſucceſsful, the common belief is, that it has been ill conducted. In free governments ſuch as ours, a change of miniſters generally preceded a change of meaſures. We are in this reſpect very unfortunate at preſent; for the lords and gentlemen in the minority have adopted and adhered to principles with regard to America, ſo directly oppoſite to the univerſal ſenſe of the nation, that it is impoſſible they can be received into power. Happily, indeed, no change ſeems abſolutely neceſſary at preſent, except in the war department.

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tion around us have ſuch high military eſtabliſhments, while foreign wars are certain, while an invaſion is poſſible, and the ſubjection and dependence of America a deſirable object; it is neceſſary that we ſhould have ſome ready reſource on extraordinary occaſions, beſides the ſtanding army. And the only reſource we can have, that is at once agreeable to the principles of the conſtitution, and ſuitable to the exingencies of the ſtate, I contend, is a well regulated militia.

On this head I am aware that I have to meet a very formidable antagoniſt in a celebrated author, who having delivered a ſyſtem on the nature and cauſes of the wealth of nations, no leſs juſt than ingenious and profound, has a right to a degree of belief from the publick, which an anonymous pamphleteer muſt not pretend to. Had *Dr. Smith* confined himſelf within the bounds of his own ſyſtem, I ſhould not venture to combat his opinions. But as he has ſometimes broke out of his magic circle, and made excurſions into the fields of general politicks, I am bold enough to attack him in one of his ſallies; I mean his

chapter on *the Expence of Defence*, vol. II. lib 5.

I ſhall paſs by the doctor's obſervations, on the military force of ſtates in the two firſt periods of ſociety, while men remain ſhepherds or huſbandmen; becauſe they not only ſeem to be juſt, but relate not to my ſubject. But I ſhall ſtate his opinion when he comes to treat of the defence of an induſtrious and wealthy nation, in which he ſays, "Unleſs the ſtate takes ſome new "meaſures for the public defence, the na-"tural habits of the people render them "altogether uncapable of defending them-"ſelves."

"In theſe circumſtances, he adds, vol. "II. p. 300, there ſeems to be but two "methods in which the ſtate can make any "tolerable proviſion for the public de-"fence.

"It may either firſt, by means of a very "rigorous police, and in ſpite of the whole "bent of the intereſt, genius, and incli-"nations of the people, enforce the prac-"tice of military exerciſes, and oblige ei-"ther all the citizens of the military age, "or a certain number of them, to join, in

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" ſome meaſure, the trade of a ſoldier to
" whatever other trade or profeſſion they
" may happen to carry on.

" Secondly, by maintaining and em-
" ploying a certain number of citizens in
" the conſtant practice of military exer-
" ciſes, it may render the trade of a ſoldier
" a particular trade, ſeparate and diſtinct
" from all others."

The firſt is ſaid to be a militia, the ſecond a ſtanding army. He then proceeds to ſhew the great ſuperiority of the ſecond over the firſt: and, without making any compariſon between the expence of each, or expreſsly drawing any concluſion himſelf, he endeavours to make his readers infer from the whole, that a militia can be of little or no uſe, and that a ſtanding army is alone adequate to the defence of a modern civilized nation, ſuch as ours.

When our author takes ſo much pains to ſhew the ſuperiority of a ſtanding army over a militia, he ſeems to me to be diſputing without an opponent. It is allowed on all hands that veterans are ſuperior to new raiſed troops; that the maſters of trades are more expert than their apprentices. I never heard that the friends of a militia,

militia, of late years, had any idea of putting it in place of a ſtanding army; they only propoſed to ſubjoin it to the regular force, as uſeful at all times to preſerve the warlike ſpirit among the people, and as neceſſary often for national defence. They are deſirous that every man who is able to bear arms, ſhould, once in his life, be trained to the uſe of them; they are ſollicitous that a ſufficient force ſhould always be ready for internal defence: but they are not anxious about the mode on which this may be accompliſhed. As it might be inconvenient to train the whole kingdom at once, they would be ſatisfied with having it done by degrees, in the county regiments, where the private men were to ſucceed each other by rotation, according to the original plan of the militia law for England; or by means of military ſchools for the youth alone, or any other plan that would cure that averſion to arms, or prevent that incapacity for the exerciſe of them, which our author ſays, is incident to a people who are far advanced in agriculture and manufactures. It is to overcome that indiſpoſition to arms, on account of which he thinks a ſtanding army

my neceſſary, that they think a militia likewiſe neceſſary; without it, no ſtanding army, that we can maintain, is adequate to the defence of the ſtate; with it, beſides its other advantages, we ſhould unite a wiſe oeconomy to conſtant preparation for war.

The celebrated authors of the Encyclopedie, with that degree of ignorance with which men often treat of the affairs of foreign nations, have, in the article *Militia*, informed the world that the militia of England conſiſts of two hundred thouſand men, all divided into battalions, and commanded by the reſpective lords lieutenants of the counties, who are appointed by the king. The miſtake of theſe philoſophers points out to us, what idea they conceive of the internal force of Great Britain, and contains a tacit reproach againſt government, for leaving us in a ſtate ſo extremely defenceleſs. If eight thouſand untrained, half-armed militia, were able to penetrate to the centre of England unoppoſed, in the year 1745; if Thurot, with three ſmall irregular veſſels, could inſult our coaſts, and make deſcents with impunity for ſome weeks in the year 1760; what

what might our enemies have not done laſt ſummer, to diſturb our government at leaſt, if not to conquer the kingdom, when our whole force had croſſed the Atlantic? When there remained not in Scotland a ſingle perſon who had ever fired a muſket, except a few deer-ſtealers and poachers; nor in England any force but the guards, and a ſcanty, diſperſed, undiſciplined, unarrayed, and diſheartened militia?

Could it have been foreſeen that the legiſlature of Great Britain, or even the ſervants of the crown, would have left us in a ſtate of imbecillity ſo inviting to hoſtility, ſo ſoon after a glorious war, by which we had raiſed the envy, or provoked the reſentment of all our neighbours? Is the indolence and negligence of ſtateſmen as ſupine, as the love of power is boundleſs?

The idea of our French philoſophers is not ſo impracticable, as it may ſeem at firſt: not that ſuch a number could be in arms at one time; but ſuch a number, or a greater, by a proper plan of policy might be trained to arms, ſo as to become an inexhauſtible reſource to the commonwealth, in caſe of extremity. If Great Britain and

Ireland

Ireland contain ten millions of inhabitants, as is generally ſuppoſed, then one of every *fifty inhabitants*, or one of every *ten men*, might be trained to the exerciſe of arms; it would require that proportion only, to complete the two hundred thouſand defenſible men. But how is this to be executed? The anſwer is, how is it executed in Switzerland, and in America? It is the buſineſs of the legiſlature to preſcribe the mode, and to enforce it. Certainly it cannot be impracticable, it cannot even be difficult, by means of ſteady policy, and the countenance and example of their ſuperiors, to train the Britiſh youth to the dexterous uſe of the firelock, on holidays, and at their leiſure hours. In a few years after ſuch an inſtitution took place, were it executed with tolerable care, the whole body of the people would feel like *men* upon an alarm, and, when neceſſary, would enter with alacrity and confidence into the armies of their country: for though they might in part forget the habits of their youth, the exerciſe of the muſket, yet they never could be diveſted of the fortitude and courage they had acquired by the uſe of arms.

To return to our Britiſh philoſopher: let us examine the great foundation of his opinion of the inutility of a militia in any form, among nations that are highly civilized; for ſuch is the plain reſult of his chapter on the expence of defence, however contrary it may ſeem to other parts of his book. The ground of his opinion is this, that the diviſion of labour in modern times, makes it neceſſary that the ſoldier ſhould be a ſeparate trade, like that of the weaver, the ſmith, or the carpenter: and this he ſupports by arguments drawn from the averſion and incapacity of the manufacturer, or even of the huſbandman, in an improved ſtate of agriculture, for the exerciſe of arms; from the greater difficulty of the military art in modern than in ancient times; and from the more horrid aſpect of war, ſince the invention of gunpowder, than before it.

This may appear plauſible in ſpeculation; but when we appeal to matter of fact, we ſhall find, I apprehend, that the doctor has not examined this ſubject with his uſual accuracy.

It will be allowed that the neceſſary arts are carried to as great perfection in Great Britain,

Britain, as in any part of the world. We have here no ſchool for arms; none but gentlemen receive any branch of military education; none but they are permitted ſo much as to carry a fowling piece. The ſtanding army we have then, ſmall as it is in time of peace, is neceſſarily compoſed of men bred to all the various mechanical employments in the kingdom; and yet they conſtitute that military force, which our author thinks ſo formidable. But it may be alledged that they have time to be thoroughly bred to the trade of arms. Suppoſing this to be true, it frequently happens, however, that there is a neceſſity for making ſudden and large levies; then it is, that the din of war raiſes the enthuſiaſm of the people for the national honour, and makes them ruſh to arms by thouſands, from huſbandry and manufactures; then it is, that in ſpite of their previous indiſpoſition, and all the habits of body and mind to which they have been accuſtomed by the arts, that they ſoon acquire this new and difficult *trade of war*; and by the time they firſt can be brought in view of the enemy, have learned to face even the thundering cannon without diſmay. Of ſuch

kind

kind of men were the armies compoſed, who laſt war were victorious in every quarter of the globe. Of the ſame mould were thoſe heroes, who remained unconquered even in captivity; thoſe brave men who followed Burgoyne, through all the difficulties and hardſhips of his march; who, having famine to encounter, and an hoſt four times their number, lay upon their arms in that frozen clime in the open air, for eleven days and nights, while a ſingle diſcontented murmur was not heard among them: and in that poſture dictated for themſelves, the moſt honourable terms of capitulation, to their ſurrounding foes. In the midſt of her diſaſters and her tears, let Great Britain rejoice, that the hiſtories of Greece and Rome, in their moſt warlike periods, furniſh no picture of fortitude and magnanimity ſuperior to this! Let us do juſtice alſo to their enemies; for they, ſtruck with the dignity of the Britiſh lions in their toils, ſtrove with manly ſympathy to alleviate their misfortunes, by the generoſity of their conduct.

The hiſtory of modern armies, and of our own in particular; authoriſes me to conclude, that the habits of the huſband-

man or manufacturer, do not in the leaſt incapacitate him for the trade of a ſoldier.

Let us next examine the other two arguments of our author, viz. that the modern art military is more difficult than the ancient, and that the aſpect of war is now more tremendous than it was in former times.

The fact itſelf ought to decide here, for if the weavers, and taylors, and button-makers, men of the moſt ſedentary profeſſions, and of the moſt uniform ſameneſs of habits, both of body and mind, are, without the leaſt previous preparation, capable of being taught, in a few months, the whole manual exerciſe and manœuvres of the preſent art military, and to brave all the horrors of gun powder, with its inviſible deaths; there certainly can be nothing in it more difficult or tremendous than there was in ancient war, for which the Greeks and the Romans, freemen and citizens of the firſt cities in the world, were inceſſantly trained to arms from their earlieſt youth, that they might acquire a ſuperiority over the barbarous nations that were around them.

I will readily admit our author's opinion, that ſkill and dexterity in arms, and even bodily ſtrength were of greater importance to the ancient warrior than to the modern. For beſides that ſkill and ſtrength naturally inſpire men with courage, and in that reſpect are of equal uſe in every age; yet as the ancients for the moſt part cloſed with each other in the field, and fought man to man, dexterity and ſkill at their weapons among them, was of greater importance to the individual than in modern battles, which are generally decided without ſuch cloſe encounters. But I cannot allow that regularity, order, and prompt obedience, are more neceſſary in the battalion, than they were in the phalanx or legion; nor that the thunder of modern war can be ſo formidable, eſpecially to the experienced, as the dreadful battles of the ancients were, when half of either army generally periſhed on the field. If it is true that the invention of gun powder has made war leſs bloody than it formerly was, it muſt certainly ſtrike leſs terror in the field. Thunder itſelf does not much alarm mankind,

kind, becauſe the number is ſmall that are ſlain by it.

Since experience then teaches us, that the greateſt improvements in arts and manufactures, do not incapacitate men, even freſh from their employments, for the exerciſe of arms; and ſince dexterity in arms is not ſo neceſſary, and order and regularity, and prompt obedience, not more ſo in modern, than they were in ancient times; ſince the art of war is neither more difficult, nor the aſpect of it more horrid than it was; have we any reaſon to conclude, that it is neceſſary to make the ſoldier's a ſeperate trade now, more than it was formerly? if the huſbandman and manufacturer make ſuch excellent ſoldiers, when they are thoroughly trained, would they make worſe ſoldiers, if they had acquired ſome habits in arms in their youth, by means of an inſtitution ſuch as the militia? can it be difficult to ſubjoin an art, which all men learn ſo ſoon and with ſo much eaſe, to any other trade which they profeſs? would the exerciſe of the muſket render them more imperfect weavers or ſmiths, any more than cricket, or foot ball, or golf, on holidays? and if

they were taught that exercise, would they be of no service in the defence of their country?

The learned author has indeed decided this point himself; for though he had argued strongly for making the soldier's a separate trade, on the grounds I have mentioned, yet he says, p. 304. "That a militia of any kind, which has served for "several successive campaigns in the field, "becomes in every respect a standing army." He adds, "Should the war in "America drag out through another campaign, the American militia may become, in every respect, a match for that "standing army, of which in the last war, "the valour appeared, at least, not inferior to that of the hardiest veterans of "France and Spain."

In this single paragraph, in my judgment, he has taken off the effect of all he had said before; for "if any militia, as "he says, (what they were before they "took the field is of little importance,) in "a few campaigns become in every re-"spect a standing army:" and if the Americans, in two campaigns, (as the author foretells, for he wrote in spring 1776)

1776) would become in every reſpect a match for that ſtanding army, which he rates as high as the braveſt veterans in Europe, then I think it clearly follows, that a militia, is by no means a deſpicable eſtabliſhment for the defence of a country. For what is the object, but ſuch an inſtitution, as will furniſh us with a military force, that is at once cheap, ready, and inexhauſtible as long as there are men left alive? The ſtanding army has but one of theſe advantages, they are ready; and if the militia, which joins to that the other two, becomes to all intents and purpoſes as *good* as the army in a few campaigns, would it not be wiſe in a ſtate ſuch as ours, to encourage, to improve, to extend over the whole realm ſuch an uſeful eſtabliſhment? Let us learn from our rebellious children in America. They armed a militia in defence of their claims and pretenſions; and neither in the firſt, nor in the ſucceſſive campaigns, have that militia ſuffered any deciſive defeat. Their abettors, and the timid on the ſide of our government, alledge that their gallant defence is owing to the ſtrenuous efforts of *a riſing ſtate*, which in the end will prove

invincible to a nation as old as ours, and viſibly in decay. I have no ſuch inauſpicious fears. Their reſiſtance has been as much owing to our miſconduct, as to their vigour; and when we return to principles congenial to our conſtitution, we ſhall again be able to reſume the ſuperiority of a parent ſtate. While liberty remains entire in a political inſtitution, it can never decay: that preſerves to it a ſecret energy, which at certain periods throws off the bad conſequences of luxury and miſgovernment, draws medicine from poiſon, turns even diſaſtrous events to advantage, and renews the youthful vigour of the ſtate.

There is another paſſage in this chapter wherein our author ſeems to me to have anſwered himſelf, no leſs than in that now quoted, though not in terms ſo explicit. It is in p. 309, where he ſays, "the ſoldiers of a ſtanding army, though "they may never have ſeen an enemy, "yet have frequently appeared to poſſeſs "all the courage of veteran troops, and "the very moment that they took the "field, to be fit to face the hardieſt and "moſt experienced veterans." Here he mentions

mentions the valour of the Ruſſians in Poland, in the year 1756; and that of the Engliſh in the year 1739, after a peace of twenty-eight years, when not a ſoldier of our army could ever have ſeen an enemy. Surpriſing indeed, that there ſhould be ſo much virtue in a name, as to make the very ſame kind of men, artizans, huſbandmen, and manufacturers, heroes when called a ſtanding army, and poltroons when called a militia; though in the very ſame ſtate with reſpect to exerciſe and diſcipline. For it will be allowed that the ſtanding army which took the field in 1739, was in theſe articles on a level with a militia. Far inferior indeed to the militia, that was embodied in England laſt war. I could point out ſundry other inſtances of the valour of Britiſh troops who never had ſeen an enemy; ſuch as that of Fraſer's and Montgomery's regiments, in the years 1756 or 1757, who never had handled fire-arms till they entered the tranſports; and yet when they landed at Louiſburgh, took the field with all the bravery of veterans. And if *they* may be reckoned an exception to common rules, becauſe they went by the name of Highland regiments,

the ſame obſervation applies to the regiments that were ſuddenly augmented in Ireland, from twenty-five to ſeventy men a company, and who acquitted themſelves with equal valour; and to Elliot's light horſe, who conſiſted chiefly of journeymen taylors, and yet did ſuch wonders in Germany. In ſhort, the Doctor has ſuch a predilection for a ſtanding army, that he aſcribes bravery to the magic of that name, and not to the manhood, with which all men are inſpired, when not debaſed by oppreſſive governments.

But if the bravery of our troops in the year 1739, furniſhes any proof of our author's opinion (the contrary of which I have endeavoured to ſhew), I could point out to him ſome inſtances, which he ſeems to have forgot, wherein the valour of militia from the moment they took the field, was as conſpicuous as that of the Ruſſians in 1756, or of the Engliſh in 1739. The Scotch militia in 1745, though only half-armed, defeated the ſtanding army of Cope at Preſton-Pans, that were not inferior to them in numbers. But if our author ſhould alledge, that Cope's troops were a militia as well as them (for

he

he generally calls unſucceſsful armies by that name), let it be remembered, that the ſame militia who beat Cope, ſoon after at Falkirk, defeated the very ſtanding army, who had won ſo many laurels, by their gallant behaviour, if not by their victories, in the war that commenced in the year 1739.

Our author concludes the paragraph laſt quoted with this ſentence.—" In a long " peace, the general perhaps may forget " his ſkill: but where a well regulated " ſtanding army has been kept up, the " ſoldiers ſeem never to forget their va- " lour." p. 310. The reaſon of this is plain, though not what our author ſeems to ſuppoſe. Valour which is the merit of a ſoldier, is natural to man in a ſound ſtate of body and mind: but the merit of a general, which is the art of properly directing that valour, includes the chief of human talents, not only natural, but acquired; and requires not only genius, but experience too.

If I have ſucceeded in overturning the foundation of Dr. Smith's opinion of the inutility of a militia for defence, it will be needleſs for me to follow him through his

remarks

remarks on the hiſtory of all ages, which he ſays, "bears teſtimony to the irreſiſt-"ible ſuperiority which a well regulated "ſtanding army has over every ſort of "militia." Had our author completely proved this aſſertion, he would have gained nothing by it. Who ever denied that as one army may ſurpaſs another, in the uſe of their arms, in diſcipline, or, which is very important too (though our author lays no ſtreſs on it), in the ſpirit of the men; ſo likewiſe may it ſurpaſs a militia. But I affirm likewiſe, that a well-regulated militia, in the ſenſe of the word in which Doctor Smith moſt commonly underſtands it, viz. a body of troops haſtily levied, who never ſaw an enemy, have very often been found ſuperior to a long eſtabliſhed ſtanding army. I mean troops of a nation, where by means of good government, the minds of men have ſtill retained ſome degree of force and elevation.

Our author through the whole of his obſervations on hiſtory, ſeems to me to have inadvertently put the change upon his reader and on himſelf, whenever it ſerved to ſupport his own opinion. When troops are ſucceſsful, whatever they were before,

before, he honours them with the name of a ſtanding army: and whenever they are defeated, he degrades them to a militia. The Romans for inſtance, the moſt warlike people on earth, loſt the battle of Cannæ, ſays he, becauſe they were only a militia, and could not reſiſt the ſtanding army of Hannibal. But when Hannibal is defeated on the plains of Zama, it was becauſe this ſtanding army was much reduced and united with the other forces of Carthage, was now become a militia; whereas the Romans under Scipio were a ſtanding army.

And thus by running the change upon words, without taking in any of the circumſtances that are much more conſiderable in deciding the fate of battles, than the deſignation or even the character of the troops, he aſcribes the whole to their being a militia, or a ſtanding army; and changes the appellation conſtantly with the fortune of the war.

If our author had ſtated the diſtinction between a militia and a ſtanding army, as the terms are commonly underſtood, he would have found that the Roman armies in the moſt ſucceſsful times of the common-

wealth,

wealth, were no more than militia. That is ſay, he would have found they were Roman citizens armed in their turns, and under the command of the ordinary magiſtrates of the commonwealth, who were annually relieved. He would have found that the diſtinction of ſoldier and citizen, of civil and military officer, was unknown in that place, until thoſe wretched times, in which the principal uſe made of armies, was to enſlave their own country: and when the profeſſional troops ſo much boaſted of, for which he contends, were unable to defend that country againſt the armies of barbarous nations conſiſting of mere militia, who came to invade them.

But admitting that it had been always as the Doctor has ſtated it, through the hiſtory of the world; admitting that a ſtanding army has had always the ſuperiority over every ſort of militia; yet what argument does that furniſh againſt a militia, if in a campaign or two, as he maintains, *that* will become to all intents and purpoſes as good as any army? The ſtanding army itſelf, is as uſeleſs as the militia in time of peace, with this difference, that their labour is entirely loſt; while

that

that of the militia, if well regulated, is as profitable as it was before. And when war comes, a modern war that laſts for ſeveral campaigns (for we have no longer any predatory incurſions of a few weeks) the militia will ſoon become equal to the ſtanding army.

Our author in ſhort, ſeems to me to have done nothing leſs, than prove the uſefulneſs of a militia for national defence: on the contrary, he has made it clear to me beyond diſpute, that a well regulated inſtitution of this ſort, is the beſt internal defence for Great Britain. I do not exclude the ſtanding army; let it be as numerous as before. But let the militia be at leaſt double of what it now is, and let care be taken that every man be trained in his turn. With ſuch a reſpectable force as the two together would form, we never could be unprepared for war. If always prepared, many wars would be prevented; the bad conſequences of luxury, and an unwarlike ſpirit would be avoided; commerce, and the arts would ſuffer leſs than they do by the raſh and haſty levies that we are often obliged to make; the military character would be in more eſteem, and

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the military profeſſion would draw into it men of greater talents and abilities, when all the noblemen and gentlemen of the kingdom were bred to arms: and the whole nation being not only free, but warlike, the ſpirit of our ſtanding army could not fail to riſe to the utmoſt height.

The clamour that is ſometimes made about the danger of the martial ſpirit to agriculture and manufactures is unjuſt, and if liſtened to will prove fatal to our empire. Modern hiſtory ſhews us in the example of the Swiſs, that their union is conſiſtent with the proſperity of both. Nay, our own experience teaches us every fifteen or twenty years, when we are neceſſarily engaged in expenſive and bloody wars, that they are not incompatible. A well-directed exertion of example and police, I am perſuaded, would convince us of the ſame in time of peace. And as our exertions in that caſe would be ſteady and permanent, they would not prove ſo enfeebling as our feveriſh and temporary efforts *. But if

*. The intereſt of the millions already expended on the American war, amounts to more than would ſupport the peace eſtabliſhment of a militia five times the number of the Engliſh militia at preſent.

there

there ſhould be ſome ſmall interference, it is ſurely better to be a little leſs rich and commercial, than by ceaſing to be men, to endanger our exiſtence as a nation. Let us attend to the examples that are pointed out to us in the downfall of other nations; let us guard with jealous vigilance the conſtitution of our country; leſt, like the greateſt empire that ever was, that of the Romans in their decadency, we become ſo luxurious or effeminate, as to leave the uſe of arms to ſtrangers and mercenaries.

Let us hear Dr. Smith himſelf, in another chapter, and he will confirm us in this opinion. It is in his chapter on the expence of inſtitutions for education, vol. ii. p. 371. "That in the progreſs of improvement, the practice of military exercises, unleſs government takes proper pains to ſupport it, goes gradually to decay, and together with it the martial ſpirit of the great body of the people, the example of modern Europe ſufficiently demonſtrates. But the ſecurity of every ſociety muſt always depend, more or leſs, upon the martial ſpirit of the great body of the people. In the preſent times indeed, that martial ſpirit

alone,

" alone, and unſupported by a well-diſ-
" ciplined ſtanding army, would not per-
" haps have been ſufficient for the defence
" and ſecurity of any ſociety. But where
" every citizen had the ſpirit of a ſoldier,
" a ſmaller ſtanding army would ſurely be
" requiſite; that ſpirit beſides would neceſ-
" ſarily diminiſh very much the dangers to
" liberty, whether real or imaginary, which
" are commonly apprehended from a ſtand-
" ing army. As it would very much faci-
" litate the operations of that army againſt
" an invader, ſo it would obſtruct them
" as much, if ever they ſhould be unfortu-
" nately directed againſt the conſtitution
" of the ſtate."

We muſt underſtand this reſpectable author, you ſee, my lord, as we do Scripture, by comparing one paſſage with another, and taking the general ſcope of the whole; for nothing can be more explicit, than this laſt paragraph, in favour of a militia, or ſome military ſchool, to preſerve the martial ſpirit of the people; and I am entirely at a loſs to account for many parts of his chapter on *the expence of defence*, unleſs he intended them as a kind of apology to his countrymen, for the conduct of

adminiſtration, and to make them feel themſelves leſs degraded by the rejection of the militia bill for Scotland, in Spring 1776.

If I have made it appear, that there is nothing in the characters of men in modern times, to diſable them from adding the trade of ſoldier to any other profeſſion, ſince, according to Dr. Smith, let them come from the moſt ſedentary employments, they are brave from the firſt hour, and in one campaign, or at moſt in two, become hardy veterans; can there remain a doubt, were there no examples before our eyes in the Swiſs and in the Americans, that it is not only poſſible but eaſy, to unite the characters of a ſoldier and citizen together: to train a man to the uſe of arms, even while he is an induſtrious ploughman, or manufacturer? It is not neceſſary he ſhould be ſo expert in every part of his duty, as the ſoldier of a ſtanding army. It were enough if he was well acquainted with the uſe of the firelock and bayonet, had learned a ready obedience to his officer, and knew to what corps he was to join himſelf in caſe of an alarm. Surely all this might be

taught him, at his leiſure hours and on holidays.

No man thinks himſelf excuſed from, or diſabled for the common duties of ſociety, on account of his intenſe application to his own private employment: many important offices of civil life are filled up by men of different callings. No man thinks himſelf exempted from the duties of religion, becauſe he is a ſober and induſtrious citizen. He finds no difficulty in uniting his duty to God and his duty to his family. Surely his duty to his country is of like obligation. Courage, and the ability to defend himſelf, next to his religion and probity (equally with them I ſhould ſay, for he muſt be very imperfect in either without courage) are the moſt eſſential qualities of a citizen: he is not properly a man indeed without them: the animal is maimed and defective. Hear Dr. Smith on this point, and I ſhall quote him no more.

" A coward, a man incapable either " of defending or of revenging himſelf, " evidently wants one of the moſt eſſential " parts of the character of a man. He is " as much mutilated and deformed in his " mind,

" mind, as another is in his body, who is " either deprived of ſome of his moſt eſſen- " tial members, or has loſt the uſe of thoſe " members. He is evidently the more " wretched or more miſerable of the " two: becauſe happineſs and miſery, " which reſide altogether in the mind, " muſt neceſſarily depend more on the " healthful or unhealthful, the mutilated " or entire ſtate of the mind, than upon " that of the body. He adds, that though " the martial ſpirit were of no uſe for the " defence of the ſociety, yet to prevent " that ſort of mental mutilation, deformity " and wretchedneſs, which cowardice ne- " ceſſarily involves in it, from ſpreading " themſelves through the great body of the " people, would ſtill deſerve the moſt ſe- " rious attention of government." Vol. ii. p. 372. Has any other author ever uſed a ſtronger argument for a military education, than this is?

If a militia or military ſchool is an uſeful, a neceſſary inſtitution, there ſurely never was a period when the neceſſity of it was more apparent than the preſent. The great continent of America has rebelled againſt us, and ſet up an independent ſtate.

Not only are the dignity of the crown of Great Britain, and the honour of the nation at ſtake, but our wealth and power are in the utmoſt danger of being greatly diminiſhed. If America ſucceeds, we ſhall not only loſe the benefit of their trade, but we ſhall be deprived of our Newfoundland fiſhery, and driven from our ſugar-iſlands: and, which is worſt of all, as every man will find in thoſe new ſtates, not only the language and manners of his country, but a religion and government ſuited to his taſte, and property in land at the loweſt rate, it will be impoſſible to reſtrain thouſands and ten thouſands of our people from emigrating, to that riſing Atalantis; and this once flouriſhing kingdom will be left deſolate and defenceleſs. If the doctrine were true, that no place can long be empty in flouriſhing ſocieties, that wherever there is room and ſubſiſtence, there men will be; this can only apply to riſing and proſperous ſtates, and not to a kingdom ruſhing to decay.

The rebellions which have diſturbed this country ſince the Revolution, aimed only at altering the ſucceſſion of the crown from one family to another, and took their riſe from prejudices; attachment to the houſe

of

of Stuart, or diſcontent with that of Hanover. Such rebellions could not poſſibly have ſucceeded, unleſs all the limitations on the crown, enacted at the Revolution, had been yielded to. But this rebellion not only attacks the perſon on the throne, but the throne itſelf: not only the regal power, but the ſupremacy of parliament; the dignity and ſovereignty of the ſtate of Britain: and ſets the moſt dangerous of all examples, viz. that diſtance alone is a ſufficient ground for independency. Other rebellions could have only ſhifted the crown from one head to another, and the new prince, as in caſes of the like nature, muſt have given at leaſt as ſtrong ſecurity for the rights of the people as the old one. But if this rebellion in America proves ſucceſsful, it will be in conſequence of republican principles of the moſt levelling kind; and the victors will no doubt aim, with the aſſiſtance of their reſtleſs friends in England, to overturn that happy limited monarchy, which experience has taught us is beſt ſuited to a realm ſo extenſive as ours, and which has been long the glory of Britain, and the envy of all the world.

In proſecution of this war, which is likely to prove of an expence and difficulty proportioned to its conſequence, a ſtanding army of national troops has been, and is likely to be employed again on the weſtern ſide of the Atlantick. And how is that army to be ſupplied with recruits? how are we to be defended from inſults at home? how ſhall we be able to bear with fortitude the uncertain events of war? Surely by no other method, but by arming the people. To preſerve our commerce and our conſtitution, we muſt raiſe the military with our civil and commercial policy. Of what advantage is the poſſeſſion of both the Indies, if we are not able to defend them? Of the natural ſtrength of a nation, bravery is as eſſential a part, as induſtry, or numbers of men. Nothing is truly inexhauſtible, but the virtue, conſtancy, and ſpirit of a warlike people.

The danger of a war with France is another motive to excite us to form ſome laſting eſtabliſhment for arms. We exerciſed our dominion of the ſea, during laſt war, with ſuch abſolute power, that we need not be ſurpriſed, if even againſt their intereſt, *the houſe of Bourbon* ſhould watch

an opportunity to execute their revenge, and humble our pride. If they ſhould, the nation muſt be called to arms, for in ſpite of our fleet, we ſhall be continually in terror for threatened invaſions, I muſt confeſs, that amidſt all my complaints of miſconduct, and reluctance to arm, that I am happy to ſee, that the Britiſh lion begins at laſt to rouſe. Whether Burgoyne has been raſh, or only unfortunate, he is likely to prove the ſaviour of his country. I hold it as a good omen, that the ſpirit of the people riſes on defeat. Would to heaven it may be directed with wiſdom! Had the great cities, inſtead of raiſing regiments for the ſervice, which muſt obſtruct the other levies, offered to arm their reſpective cities for their own defence, a greater force could have been ſpared for the war, a ſmaller number of men would have been taken at once from agriculture and manufactures, and the great object I have in view, would in part have been accompliſhed, viz. the union of the character of the citizen and ſoldier.

One thing is certain, that this is the propereſt time, the time of danger and alarm, for the friends of that inſtitution,

which I think of ſo much importance, to exert all their endeavours. Improvements in policy ſeldom ariſe but from preſſing occaſions: and the zeal of the wiſeſt patriots is unable to produce remarkable changes, except when it acts in relief of ſome real complaint. Were our conteſt with America to be patched up now, by ſome temporary expedients, in ſpite of the experience we have had of our preſent danger, and the juſt apprehenſion, or rather the certain expectation of a freſh revolt, we would immediately diſarm, without forming any laſting military inſtitution.

Intent, as ſtateſmen generally are, on the preſervation or increaſe of their own power, I entertain ſome hopes, that the preſent criſis may kindle the latent ſparks of public virtue in their breaſts, as well as rouſe the brave and generous people of England: and that they will concur in reforming, improving, and extending the militia over the whole kingdom: or fall upon ſome better method, for preſerving the warlike ſpirit of the people, and training them to arms.

The

The duty of every Scotchman, who feels the honour of his country wounded, by the repeated refuſal of the legiſlature, to communicate to us the privilege of arms, is perfectly clear. It is to uſe conſtant and inceſſant endeavours to make good our claim of right, by applying to parliament ſeſſion after ſeſſion, and year after year, till we are put in poſſeſſion of it. When external force ſhall hinder us from making our claim, we ſhall then have loſt our liberty, and be obliged to ſubmit. But when internal corruption ſhall make us ceaſe to renew our application, then ſhall we be ſlaves with our own conſent, and no longer deſerve the privileges of freemen.

I am certainly informed, that in Scotland at this moment the warlike ardor has ſeized the common people, and that they are not only raiſing large ſums by ſubſcription in the great cities, to levy ſoldiers for the army, but that manufacturers of the moſt expert kind, who can earn four times a ſoldier's pay, are enliſting by ſcores. And when their maſters remonſtrate againſt their folly, "our time is now come, ſay "they, and we muſt ſerve our king and "our country." I glory in the ſpirit of my

country-

men, whilſt I lament that it has been ſo long trampled upon.

The commons are incapable of perceiving or of feeling affronts, and therefore I extol their loyalty and zeal. But I ſhould not have been ſurpriſed if the gentry had felt in a different manner. "Why ſhould "we fight the battles of an ungrateful "nation, might they not have ſaid, who "have treated us and our country with "the greateſt marks of contempt and diſ-"dain? They have drawn a line of ſepara-"tion between us and them: they have "broken the ſacred bond which tied us "together. They have refuſed us the "badge of diſtinction between freemen "and ſlaves. Until they admit the North "to an equality of privileges with the "South, let us not draw a ſword in their "cauſe. Denied the common rights of "freemen, ſhall we become vile merce-"naries in their ſervice?" This is the language that might have been expected from *the proud ariſtocracy of Scotland*. With ſuch ſentiments boldly avowed, they might have hoped perhaps, to make terms for their diſgraced country.

Wiſely

Wiſely or not, without queſtion happily, in the preſent juncture, for the whole Britiſh empire, they ſeem to have been determined by very different motives. Not only are the young nobility offering their influence and perſonal ſervice to the crown on this occaſion, with a loyalty and zeal that is much for their honour; but many of thoſe wiſe and conſiderate perſons, who think that *they only* underſtand the true intereſt of their country, who expreſſed the moſt anxious fears leſt a militia ſhould draw too many hands from the plough and the loom, while the bill was in dependence, are now exerting their utmoſt power to ſend double the number in new levies acroſs the Atlantick. It would be as improper as vain, to remind them now, that by the eſtabliſhment of a militia, we ſhould in a great meaſure have prevented the depopulation of a country, that is far too liable to be drained of men, during the courſe of a tedious war.

The honour or intereſt of Scotland however, are points of ſmall conſideration in the general argument, whatever effects they may be ſuppoſed to operate on the ſentiments and conduct of Scottiſh gentlemen.

It

It is the intereſt and ſecurity of Britain, it is the freedom, importance, and dignity of the whole empire, that ſhould be the objects of every general and permanent inſtitution. It is therefore the members of the legiſlature for South Britain, that I would perſuade if I could, to liſten to truths of the utmoſt importance to the nation. It is to their candour and juſtice that we muſt apply to have our *wrongs redreſſed*, no leſs than to their concern for the ſafety of the commonwealth, to obtain a ſufficient eſtabliſhment for *national defence*. Might we not remonſtrate to them in the following manner?

" Ye generous friends of liberty, and " of valour, which is its offspring and its " guard! What had our countrymen done, " before they tamely endured the vile di- " ſtinction you made between you and " them, what had they done till then to " deſerve it? Was their fame in martial " atchievements inferior to that of other " nations? Or has their fidelity, when " called into exertion by confidence, been " unequal to their courage? Did they not " in the laſt war, ſo glorious for Britain, " fight the battles of their king and coun-

" try,

" try, in all the wide regions to which
" the Britiſh conqueſts extended? Ye
" ſhades of departed heroes! is it for your
" blood ſo amply ſhed in the cauſe of
" Britain, that diſtruſt and diſgrace is en-
" tailed on your poſterity? Ye ſons of ſo
" many thouſand Scottiſh who fell in battle,
" or by climes more fatal than the ſword,
" was this the promiſe which your fathers
" made, when they left their native ſhore
" never to return? Was this the reward
" which England, the empreſs of the
" main, the queen of commerce, the ar-
" bitreſs of Europe, provided for that va-
" lour, by whoſe aid ſhe conquered in the
" moſt diſtant regions of the world?

" Tell us, ye ſages of the South, ye wiſe
" ſenators who give laws to ſo many kin-
" dred nations, what intereſt has North
" Britain different from your's? Are you
" not the ſame people, tied together by
" the moſt ſacred bonds of union? By
" mixture of blood through thouſands of
" various ſtreams? By the ſame legiſlature
" and the ſame laws? By the ſame bleſſ-
" ings, derived through all the channels
" of civil liberty and political order? By
" every thing that can incorporate ſocieties

" of

" of men together? As they are one
" kingdom with you, can there be a
" diſtinction of intereſt or honour between
" you? Whatever hurts them, muſt it not
" hurt you? Whatever diſgraces them,
" muſt it not diſgrace you? If they are
" made ſtrong, will not you be ſtrength-
" ened? If they become weak, will not
" you be enfeebled? If they are conquered
" or enſlaved by a foreign power, or an
" ambitious prince, will not your ſove-
" reignty or freedom be in danger.

" Steady and united they have con-
" ſtantly ſupported the claims of Great
" Britain againſt America, though you
" bitterly reproached them for it: whilſt
" you till of late, deceived and miſled by
" popular demagogues, were willing to
" yield to all the unjuſt demands of the
" colonies. They have ſurpaſſed you in
" adherence to the conſtitution, let them
" not outdo you in generoſity! In ſpite
" of all the inſults, abuſe, and contempt
" which you have poured upon them;
" no ſooner have the diſaſters of war
" humbled your pride, alarmed your
" fears, and made you liſten to the voice
" of reaſon; than with the true ſympathy

" of

" of blood, and of kindred ſpirits, they
" kindle at your danger, and fly to arms
" for your aid! Yet this is the people
" whom in peace and proſperity, you will
" not truſt with arms for their own de-
" fence and yours! This is the very peo-
" ple, who have paid their proportion
" for the militia of England for theſe
" twenty years paſt; and yet againſt
" whom you ſtated with a minuteneſs,
" which was as much beneath you as the
" injuſtice of it, the inequality of the
" land tax; that tax which was ſettled
" for ever by the ſolemn covenant of the
" union *. Time will teach you, it is to
" be hoped, that the importance of na-
" tions does not depend ſolely on their
" wealth, but likewiſe on the numbers
" and bravery of the people. For the
" ſake of that liberty which is ſo dear
" to you! For the ſake of that conſtitu-
" tion which is ſo much your boaſt! Ye
" patriot legiſlators! if ye ſtill deſerve the
" name, ſeize this opportunity, and form
" and extend a laſting military eſtabliſh-

* The North of England pays no greater proportion of the land tax than Scotland.

" ment

" ment over both parts of the united king-
" dom, for their common ſecurity and
" glory."

I could eaſily purſue this ſubject, my Lord, at much greater length, obviate every objection that has been made to a militia in general, and demonſtrate the peculiar advantages of ſuch an inſtitution to Scotland, as well as its utility to the whole iſland. But the ſubject has been often and fully treated of before, and I am unwilling to take up your Grace's time. The grand enquiry into the ſtate of the nation is ſoon to be made, and your thoughts may be employed on more important parts of the ſubject than thoſe of which I have treated.

I muſt confeſs at the ſame time, that I am very doubtful about the propriety of ſuch an enquiry in parliament at this juncture. I am ſorry his Majeſty's miniſters yielded to ſuch an unreaſonable demand. If the enquiry is carried on to purpoſe, the ſecrets of our councils muſt be revealed, which ſeems highly improper at preſent; if they are with-held, the enquiry muſt be an abſolute farce. The time will come when the juſtice of an

injured

injured nation may require an account of the blood and treaſure, that has been fooliſhly or treacherouſly ſquandered away; as well as repay the good conduct and courage of thoſe who have ſerved their country with wiſdom and fidelity: the time to puniſh as well as to reward. Whatever betrays weakneſs, or fear, or diffidence in the ſituation we now are in, muſt be highly imprudent. His majeſty's cabinet, indeed, ought to exerciſe an unremitting vigilance; they ought to enquire into the good or bad conduct of the war; they ought to alter their plans, or change their commanders as they ſee cauſe: to them the direction of our affairs belong, and for that they are reſponſible. But publick debates on ſubjects of that nature, *durante bello*, can have none but pernicious effects.

America is now independent, and Great Britain hath hitherto in vain, attempted to humble her pride, and bring her back to her ancient allegiance. None of our armaments have ſtruck a deciſive blow; and by the captivity of Burgoyne and his army, our counſels have been diſgraced, our glory tarniſhed, and our laurels torn.

Is it poſſible for us in this poſture of our affairs to think of peace? Can we treat with the independent ſtates of America? Can we at preſent agree to a fœderal union with our ungrateful and rebellious colonies? Would there be ſafety in ſuch a treaty, were it attended with no diſhonour? We muſt either ſuffer the *congreſs to dictate* terms of peace to Great Britain (the moſt humbling, and the moſt ruinous of all events), or we muſt proſecute the war with vigour. As the indignation of the people would now certainly drive from the helm the daſtardly miniſter who ſhould propoſe the firſt part of the alternative, the ſecond without doubt, will be reſolved on. Nothing in the way of event has yet happened, to have given us one moment's diſmay, if we had not been unwarlike, and unprepared. The ſmothered fire has at laſt broke out, and our aſtoniſhment and deſpair are diſpelled. The ſpirit of the nation is now irreſiſtible, if it be conducted with wiſdom. But if ignorance with preſumption, or weakneſs with confuſion, preſide at home; and incapacity, or envy and jealouſy, lead in the field, the *Croiſades* will

be

be acted over again, the people will periſh, and the nation be undone.

If we conſult the annals of a great nation, we ſhall find that the ſenate of Rome decreed thanks to the conſul *Terentius Varro*, who had fled from the battle of *Cannæ*, with a part of the army as far as Venuſium, becauſe he had not *deſpaired* of the republick. From hence let us learn to receive even our unfortunate generals with marks of reſpect. Let us invert the rule, and hence alſo learn what ought to be done to thoſe who betray unmanly fears for the commonwealth, when their own futile plans are diſappointed.

But if the inauſpicious rulers or leaders of the war, ſhould abdicate or be diſmiſſed, where are ſucceſſors to be found? *Generals and miniſters of war* are not the growth of this commercial ſtate, it is true; but we have not yet tried our moſt experienced and ſucceſsful commanders. If they ſhould fail us, why ſhould we not be ſupplied from the continent? This opulent nation may open a ſubſcription for a *general*, as well as for an army. If gold is not enough, let all the honours be added that the king and a grateful nation can beſtow.

The ſecond defect it muſt be owned it is not eaſy to ſupply; for in a nation that muſt have foreign troops and a foreign general, how ſhall we find a military genius to direct the war? But however much the influence of his example may be diminiſhed by diſtance of time, the fact itſelf cannot be forgotten, that we had once *a miniſter for war*, who made all Europe tremble. In the hiſtoric picture, the dark ſhades of our two laſt campaigns, muſt throw luſtre on his fame. He who let looſe the American bear, could he not enchain him again? What pity if an incompatible temper, or age, or infirmities—— But I meddle not with arrangements of ſtate.

That there has been deplorable miſconduct in America, ever ſince the war became an object of importance to adminiſtration, cannot poſſibly be denied. The facts ſpeak for themſelves. With the moſt formidable army that ever croſſed the ocean; with all the dreadful artillery of Europe, and the wealth of both the Indies, which is ſtill more irreſiſtible, at our command, we have taken a few towns on the coaſt indeed, but we have neither forced nor ſeduced

duced a ſingle province from the league, nor perſuaded a ſingle chief to befriend our party. When our troops are in poſſeſſion of a territory, the people ſubmit; but the moment they march out, they are more hoſtile than before. If the congreſs on pain of death have prohibited their people to furniſh our army with proviſions, does not this teach us how war ſhould be carried on againſt them? What ſhall we ſay of the conduct of their generals? Surely, that they underſtand the nature of the war they are carrying on; and that they have proved their right to their ſeveral ſtations, by their enterprize, their vigilance, and ſkill. It is not the croſs events that have happened, but the aſpect of the war on this ſide, and that of the temper of the Americans, that ſhould make us heſitate and reflect, and alter the plan of our conduct; and change not only meaſures but men, if it be neceſſary. Fortunate generals were moſt eſteemed by the Romans.

I have expreſſed diffidence of thoſe, who are now acting on the ſcene at home and in America; but I am far, my Lord, from deſpairing of the commonwealth. Men

are formed by the times, and great objects and events excite the efforts of latent genius. If Rome had not been in danger, and Hannibal victorious, Scipio might have remained in obſcurity. That Scipio, who in his early youth, ſaved Italy and Rome by the irreſiſtible ardour of his public ſpirit; no leſs than in his maturer age, he made them triumph over Carthage by his military ſkill.

You, my Lord, ſhould know, for you have obſerved mankind with a diſcerning eye, if there are not ſome noble youths, ſome Scipios of theſe degenerate times, who by their talents and virtue, are equal to the great affairs of the nation on this important criſis. If there are, let them ſtand forth; their country calls for their aid. Unpractiſed as they may be in the arts of the orator, let them not be diſmayed. If their ſouls are dilated with patriot fire, they will ſpeak to the hearts of their auditors. Eloquence and ſophiſtry can no longer dazzle or impoſe; the times require ſound and deliberate counſel; men of bold and deciſive underſtandings are wanted, not ſplendid or ingenious reaſoners.

To bring the contention or violence of the bar, into the great ſenate of the nation, is at all times impertinent and preposterous. In the preſent ſtate of our affairs it deſerves an harder name. The talent for public ſpeaking, in all the perfection at leaſt to which we have ſeen it arrive, in ſpite of all that Cicero has ſaid in praiſe of his own art, ſeems not to be neceſſarily attended with probity or good ſenſe. Inferior degrees of it, are often mere profeſſional acquiſitions. Too much encouragement is given to this talent by the nature of our government. For it may often lead the incapable aud worthleſs to the higheſt offices of the ſtate; while the wiſe and good, through delicacy or diſdain, or the neglect of the habit of ſpeaking in their youth, are kept out of thoſe ſtations which they would fill with dignity and honour. It is to be hoped that the cabinet at leaſt, excludes thoſe who have no other merit than a talent for debate.

In ancient Rome no man could obtain any office in the magiſtracy, without having firſt ſerved nine years in the army. It would appear ſanguine to aſſert, that the conſtitution which I have been recommending, would partly cure the defect of which I com-

complain. To ſerve for ſome years as officers in the militia, it might be ſaid, were even that made a neceſſary qualification for their obtaining a place in the ſenate; could neither inſtruct our youth in the ſcience of war, nor improve their talents for great affairs. But the effect of regulations of policy on manners are ſure, though they are ſlow; and to encourage the military ſpirit, to make the military character more conſpicuous and reſpectable, would at leaſt open new views to the nobility and gentry of this realm, and ſet before them objects of ambition different from thoſe, in which they are generally outdone by the moſt ſhallow practitioners at the bar, and therefore are apt to diſdain.

Thus, my Lord, I have laid before you my thoughts on national defence. If I ſhall in any degree obtain your Grace's approbation, and turn the attention of the publick on an object ſo important, I ſhall have gained my end. I have the honour to be, with profound reſpect,

My Lord Duke,

&c. &c.

Lincoln's Inn,
Jan. 26, 1778.

T. M.